

Message Text

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72

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 AGR-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 EB-11 FRB-02 H-03 INR-10 INT-08 L-03 LAB-06

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 AID-20 CIEP-02 SS-15

STR-08 TAR-02 TRSE-00 USIA-15 PRS-01 OMB-01 RSR-01

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R 200143Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5810

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

US MISSION EC BRUSSELS 71

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 12913

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EX, EEC, ETRD, ASEAN

SUBJ: ASEAN-EC TALKS

REF: STATE 16138

1. AN EMBASSY OFFICER TALKED AUGUST 16 WITH CHET SUCHARITKUN, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL, ASEAN AND ASPAC NATIONAL SECRETARIAT, A DIVISION OF THE CONOMIC DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ON ASEAN TALKS TO BE HELD WITH EC COMMISSIONER SOAMES IN BANGKOK SEPTEMBER 5-6. CHET SAID THE ASEAN TRADE OFFICIALS WORKING-LEVEL COMMITTEE MEETING CURRENTLY BEING HELD IN KUALA LUMPUR WAS DRAFTING THE AGENDA FOR THE EEC/ASEAN MEETING TO PRESENT FOR APPROVAL TO THE ASEAN TRADE MINISTER'S MEETING TO BE HELD IN JAKARTA AUGUST 22-24. PRASIT KANCHANAWAT, MINISTER OF COMMERCE, WILL HEAD THE THAI
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DELEGATION TO THE JAKARTA CONFERENCE. CHET SAID HE WOULD

PROVIDE A COPY OF THE AGENDA AFTER THE JAKARTA CONFERENCE.

2. CHET EXPLAINED THAT ASEAN WOULD BE SEEKING COMMISSIONER SOAMES' APPROVAL FOR THE EEC TO CONSIDER IMPORT DUTY CONCESSIONS FOR SEVEN PRIMARY ASEAN EXPORT EARNING PRODUCTS, FOR EXAMPLE, TAPIOCA PELLETS AND COCONUT OIL. CHET SAID IT WAS TOO EARLY TO DISCUSS THE OTHER FIVE PRODUCTS. CHET SAID ASEAN WAS NOT WILLING TO OFFER ANY CONCESSIONS TO THE EEC IN RETURN FOR THE CONCESSIONS IT WAS "BEGGING FROM THE EEC." CHET SAID THAT ASEAN WAS NOT SEEKING SPECIAL AND REVERSE PREFERENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS SIMILAR TO THOSE BETWEEN EC AND AFRICAN ASSOCIATES.

3. CHET SAID THE SHORT-RANGE OBJECTIVE OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING WAS TO OBTAIN FROM COMMISSIONER SOAMES A PROMISE THAT THE EEC WOULD PURSUE DISCUSSIONS WITH ASEAN REGARDING THESE DUTY CONCESSIONS. AT THE SAME TIME CHET OPINED THAT IT WOULD TAKE FIVE YEARS FOR ASEAN TO OBTAIN ITS LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVE, THE CONCESSIONS. CHET SAID IT WAS HIS OPINION THAT THE EEC WOULD EVENTUALLY GRANT SUCH CONCESSIONS TO ASEAN, ALTHOUGH THE EEC WOULD NOT GAIN ANY PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT IN RETURN. THE EEC SAW AN OPENING DEVELOPING IN THE TRADING PATTERNS OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES (INDEED ALL OF SOUTHEAST ASIA) WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE UNITED STATES FROM THE AREA, A GAP WHICH THE EEC HOPED IT COULD STEP IN AND FILL. CHET RECENTLY RETURNED FROM FOUR YEARS IN GENEVA WHERE HE SAID HE TALKED WITH AND WORKED WITH MANY OFFICIALS OF THE EEC.

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